

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, the applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are not rendered obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Accordingly, it is believed that this application is in condition for allowance. **If, however, the Examiner believes that there are any unresolved issues, or believes that some or all of the claims are not in condition for allowance, the applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned to schedule a telephone Examiner Interview before any further actions on the merits.**

The applicant will now address each of the issues raised in the outstanding Office Action.

Objections

Claim 2 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 2 has been rewritten in independent form to include the recitations of base claim 1. Thus, the applicant respectfully submits that claim 2 is in condition for allowance.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3-5 and 16-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 7,071,985 ("the Onoda patent") in view of Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 2000-292684 ("the Ito

publication"). The applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw this ground of rejection in view of the following.

First, since claims 1 and 16-20 have been canceled, this ground of rejection is moot with respect to these claims.

Second, since claims 3-5, as amended, depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 2 (which is in condition for allowance for reasons discussed above), claims 3-5 are also in condition for allowance.

Rejoinder of Withdrawn Claim

Further to the Election filed on July 30, 2007, since dependent claim 6 (previously withdrawn) has been amended to depend from claim 2, this claim is in condition for allowance and should be rejoined to the application.

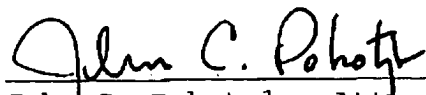
Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the applicant requests that the Examiner pass this application to issue.

Any arguments made in this amendment pertain **only** to the specific aspects of the invention **claimed**. Any claim amendments or cancellations, and any arguments, are made **without prejudice to, or disclaimer of**, the applicant's right to seek patent protection of any unclaimed (e.g., narrower, broader, different) subject matter, such as by way of a continuation or divisional patent application for example.

Respectfully submitted,

January 3, 2008



John C. Pokotylo, Attorney

Reg. No. 36,242

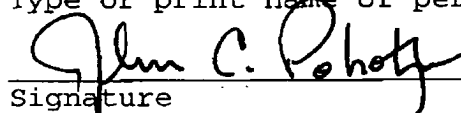
Tel.: (732) 542-9070

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